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An Illustrated History of

FORT GEORGE G. MEADE

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Fort Meade Museum

Fort George G. Meade, Maryland 20755

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Second Printing 1986

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An Illustated History of

FORT GEORGE G. MEADE

No. 357 POST HEADQUARTERS AND OFFICERS ROW—FORT GEO. G. MEADE, MD.

A World War II Postcard

The Fort Meade Museum

4674 Griffin Avenue

Fort George G. Meade, Maryland 20755

1985

GENL. GEO. G. MEADE.

READEX FICHE

The Life of George Gordon Meade

George Gordon Meade was born one of eight children of Richard and Margaret Meade on 31 December 1815. George was born in Cadiz, Spain where his father, a Philadelphia businessman was temporarily residing with his family.

On his return to the United States the Meade family sent young George to boarding school; first in Philadelphia and then Baltimore. In time he applied for appointment to West Point where he graduated in 1835.

Upon graduation George was commissioned a second lieutenant and saw service in the Seminole Wars in Florida. When the Mexican War broke out in 1846 Meade was a second lieutenant in the Topographical Engineers. He helped demonstrate the value of using Topographical Engineers as a separate unit and was breveted for bravery at the battles of Monterey, Palo Alto, and Resaca de la Palma. Following the war Meade was assigned to various engineering projects. In 1857 he received a promotion to first lieutenant and was ordered to the Atlantic Coast to supervise the construction of lighthouses. On 1856 Meade was selected to lead a comprehensive survey of the Great Lakes.

Young George G. Meade in a portrait from the period of the Mexican War.

At the outbreak of the Civil War, in April 1861, Meade was a Captain of Topographical Engineers. He was soon

appointed a brigadier general of Volunteers in August 1861. He commanded a brigade during the Pennisular Campaign where he was badly wounded.

On his recovery, he fought at Second Bull Run, South Mountain, and Antietam. In November, 1862, Meade was promoted to major general and commanded a corps at Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville. On 28 June 1863, he was selected to replace Hooker as Commander of the Army of the Potomac. Although he took command of the Army only days before the eve of battle, Meade led the Union forces to victory over Lee's Army of Northern Virginia at the decisive battle of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania on 1-3 July 1863.

Although recognized for his victory and officially given the Thanks of Congress, Meade was criticized for not exploiting his victory. Meade was hurt both professionally and personally, believing his army was too worn out by the battle to attempt a counter attack against Lee's forces.

Following Gettysburg, Meade took his army into the Rapidan and Mine Run campaigns. Meade continued in nominal command of the Army until the end of the war. General Grant, who was promoted to Commander of the Union Armies, accompanied the Army of the Potomac and actually directed operations. Despite the difficulties of this arrangement, Meade worked well with Grant and was made a major general in the regular army in August, 1864.

General Meade confers with General Grant during the Wilderness Campaign of 1864.

A GREAT VICTORY!

THREE DAYS BATTLES.

Terrific and Unparalleled Conflict.

The Rebels Utterly Routed.

THEY RETREAT TO THE MOUNTAINS.

The Culminating Battle on Friday.

Official Despatches from General Meade.

The Rebels Repulsed in Every Attack.

The President Congratulates the Country.

Splendid Conduct of the Army of the Potomac.

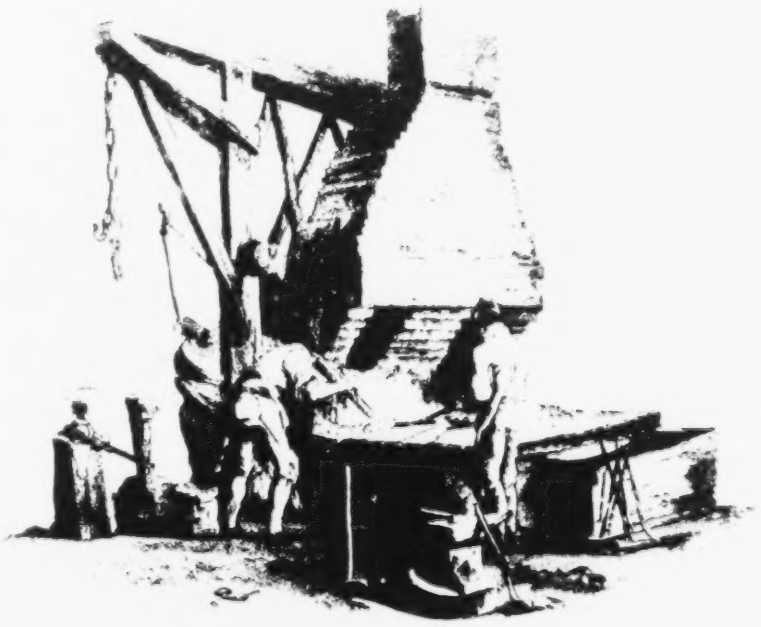
The New York Tribune announces the Union victory at Gettysburg.

Following the War, Meade commanded several military departments including the Department of the South. In the fall of 1872 he contracted pneumonia and died on 6 November. His funeral was a state affair with President Grant in attendance. On the day of his funeral business was suspended in Philadelphia and thousands of people lined the the funeral route to pay their last respects to the "Hero of Gettysburg".

The Forges on the Patuxent

One hundred and forty years before Camp Meade was established, the first military operation in this area began. An iron foundry called the Patuxent Forge, located on the branch of the Patuxent River, began making gun carriages for George Washington's Continental Army. Troops were raised to assist in the production of military goods and to help guard the forge from Tory Raiders. Later, elements of Rochambeau's French Army passed through and camped at the forge on their march to Yorktown, Virginia in the Autumn of 1781.

A Continental Soldier-
the first American Soldier
to serve in the area now
known as
Fort George G. Meade.



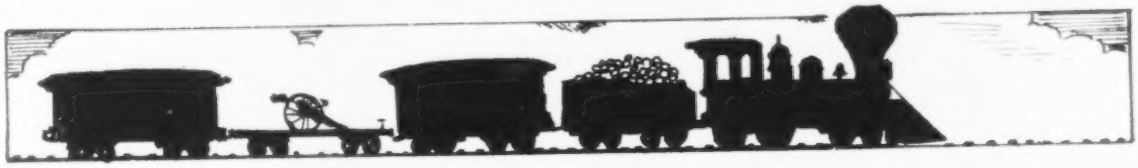
Early view of an iron forge.

The American Civil War

During the Civil War, troops again arrived in this area to protect the Annapolis and Elk Ridge Railroad, whose tracks (which now belong to the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad) still run through post. The railroad was a major route for troops, supplies and communications coming from the North to protect Washington. After Confederates attempted to destroy sections of the track in early 1861, thousands of Union troops were kept in the area to protect this vital supply line. The Civil War was the first war in history in which railroads were of tactical and strategic importance. This was well illustrated in the military emphasis placed on the railroads in the area now occupied by Fort Meade.

The Seventh New York Regiment halts for a rest near Annapolis Junction, 1861.

Union troops of Company F, 10th Maine Volunteer Infantry Regiment celebrate Thanksgiving at Camp Kelsey, Annapolis Junction, 1861



Annapolis Junction, located just off present day Fort Meade, was an important railhead for the Union Army throughout the war. The junction served as a jumping off point for soldiers and supplies headed for the battlefields of Virginia. A large Union Army Cantonment called Camp Kelsey was established in 1861 adjacent to Annapolis Junction. Later a military hospital to care for Union soldiers was also located on the site. It was named the Rulison U.S. Hospital "in honor of Surgeon William H. Rulison of the 9th New York Cavalry who fell by the hands of the enemy while in the performance of his duty at Smithfield, Virginia on 20 August 1864."

Camp Meade 1917-1918

The United States entered World War I on April 6, 1917. On May 18, a little more than a month later, a new Selective Service Act was established. This act gave the government the authority to conscript men between the ages of 21 and 30 years for the National Army. To provide housing for these new troops, Congress also provided legislation to authorize the building of 16 new cantonments.

The village of Admiral, on the Washington, Baltimore and Annapolis Railroad, in Anne Arundel County, Maryland, was chosen as a site for one of the new cantonments. The U.S. Government commandeered 4,000 acres of land, most of which was used for fruit farming (some of the fruit trees may still be seen along Chisholm Avenue). It then bought additional land bringing the total acreage to 9,349 acres. On June 23, 1917 a general contract was signed for the construction of the camp, with actual construction beginning on July 2.

The camp was named Camp Meade by War Department General Order 95, dated July 18, 1917 in honor of Major General George G. Meade. Under the direction

General Headquarters of the 79th Division at Camp Meade, 1917.

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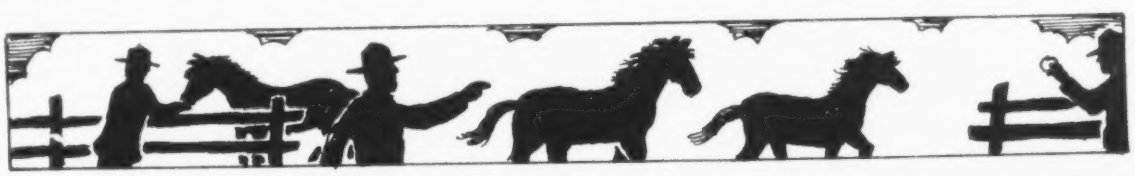
Snapshots Of Life Down At Camp Meade

A World War I period cartoon.

of Major Ralph F. Proctor, Constructing Quartermaster, the initial building project was completed by September 15, 1917. The total cost of construction was approximately eighteen million dollars.

The capacity of Camp Meade was 53,800 men. The first conscripts began to arrive even before the camp was completed. By October 1917, 23,000 men had reported for duty. The first organization formed was the 79th Infantry Division, whose men were mostly from Maryland and Pennsylvania. The Division's commander, Major General Joseph Kuhn, was also Camp Meade's first commander. Later other divisions were formed and stationed here, including the 92nd and the 11th Divisions. In addition to a combat division, an Officer's Training School, a Remount Depot, an Ordnance Supply School and a Depot Brigade were established at the camp. The Depot Brigade which was the 154th, received, classified, trained and assigned incoming trainees. In all, about 103,000 men were trained at Camp Meade during the War, and when the war ended in November 1918, the Camp served as a demobilization center for troops returning from overseas. Over 96,000 men were mustered out of the service here.



79TH Div.

92nd Div

11th Div.

During the Summer of 1918, another cantonment was authorized and constructed within a mile of Camp Meade. This was the Franklin Cantonment, named in honor of Benjamin Franklin. The 400 acre camp housed 11,000 men and was built at a cost of four million dollars as a Signal Corps Camp of Instruction (The camp was located between Ernie Pyle and Chamberlain from Rock Avenue to Mapes). Approximately two months after it opened, the camp lost its independent status and was made a permanent part of Camp Meade. Many of the famous "Hello Girls" of the Signal Corps who served overseas in the American Expeditionary Forces, were trained at Camp Franklin. These were some of the first women to serve as uniformed members of the Army, 24 years before the Women's Army Corps was established.

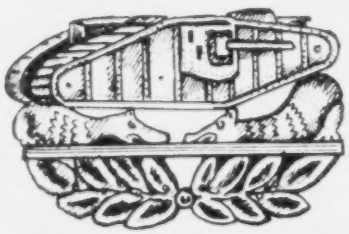
The Lighter Side Of Life At Camp Meade

Your shots are very wild, I think I'll transfer you to the artillery where you don't have to see what you are shooting at.

Between the Wars 1919-1940

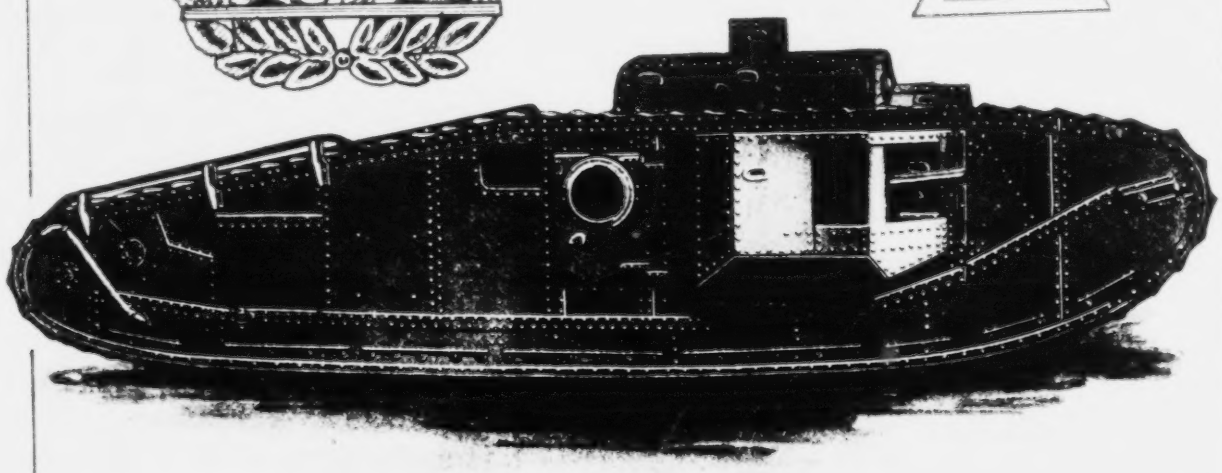
Soon after the war, in 1919, the Office of the Chief of the Tank Corps was established at Camp Meade. All of the Tank units of the Regular Army which had served in France were assigned here. Soon after this, the tank school was established here, occupying the former Franklin Cantonment area. The school remained here until 1932 when it was then transferred to Fort Benning, Georgia.

Brigadier General Samuel D. Rockenbach, former Chief of the Tank Corps and Commander of the Tank School became one of the commanders of the post as well. He served as commander of the Post from October to November 1920 and from October through December of 1922. Other famous persons who were assigned to Meade at this time included President (then Major) Dwight D. Eisenhower and General (then Lieutenant Colonel) George Patton, both of who served with the Tank Corps and Tank School at Camp Meade.

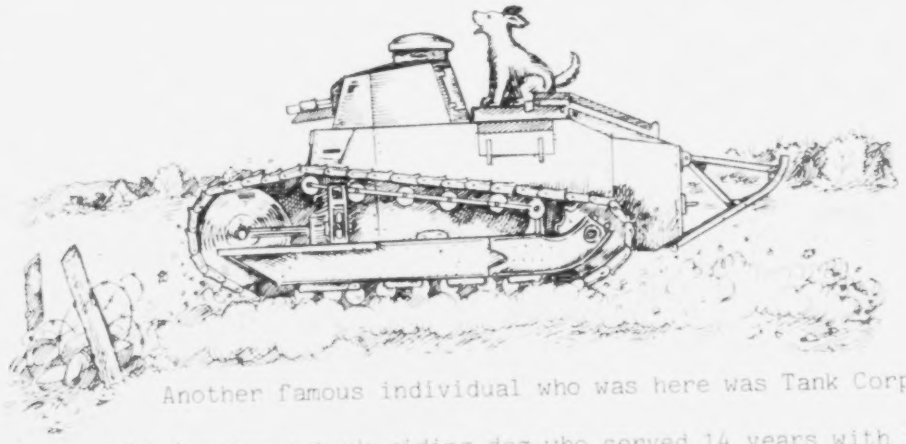


OFFICER'S TANK CORPS COLLAR INSIGNIA

TANK CORPS SHOULDER PATCH



Mark VIII Tank of the type used at Fort Meade for training.



Another famous individual who was here was Tank Corps Joe. Old Joe was a tank riding dog who served 14 years with the tanks at Meade. When Joe died in 1937, he was buried with military honors while the entire 66th Regiment (Light tanks), both officers and men, stood in formation in a driving rain to pay him tribute.

During this period, the Army Cooks and Bakers School was established at Camp Meade in what is now the Finance Building on Huber Road. A Base Hospital was established and many of the buildings built during the war were replaced or torn down. On March 2, 1928 Camp Meade was made a permanent installation and given the name Fort Leonard Wood, in honor of Major General Leonard Wood, commander of the Rough Riders during the Spanish American War and later Military Governor of Cuba. At this time there was already a Fort Meade in South Dakota. This fort (de-activated in 1941) had been opened in 1878 and had first claim to the name. Many of the citizens of Pennsylvania, however, did not like the name change. They considered General Meade to be a native son. Although born in Spain, his home was in Philadelphia. In any case, a Pennsylvania Congressman, attached a rider to the Defense Appropriations Bill for 1929, changing the Fort's name to Fort George G. Meade. The longer name would differentiate it from the Fort Meade in South Dakota. The bill passed and War Department General Order Number 6, dated March 5, 1929

In The C.M.T.C. Mill!
OUR FIRST SCARE JUNE. 26TH
ALSO OUR CLOTHING WAS A FIT (?)
WE RETURN FROM DRILL IN GOOD SPIRIT.
WE AWAKE FOR THE RANGE WITH THE "MOTH"
MESS
NOT TO FORGET OUR "K.P. SQUAD"
ALL OUT! RIFLES & BELTS!!!
THE INFANTRY "TOP KICKS" FAVORIT SPEECH!
HOMEWARD BOUND!! HAPPY— BUT COMING BACK AGAIN!!!

Cartoon from the CMTC book "The Defender", Camp Meade 1923.

(effective February 25, 1929) renamed the installation.

About 2200 troops were assigned to Fort George G. Meade during the 1930's. These included the headquarters of the 16th Infantry Brigade, the 34th Infantry Regiment, and the 66th Infantry Regiment (Light tanks). These units assisted in the Summer Training of the Citizens Military Training Corps (CMTC), the Reserve Officer's Training Corps (ROTC), the Officer's Reserve Corps and units of the National Guard.

By 1940 the post had 251 permanent brick buildings and 218 wooden temporary buildings. However, with the passage of the New Selective Service and Training Act of 1940, an eight million dollar construction project was begun at Meade. By January 1941, Fort George G. Meade had become the fourth largest community in Maryland. It was at this time that additional training areas were added, expanding the post to its present size of 13,500 acres. The Installation had become almost self-sufficient, with its own sewage disposal, filtration and pumping stations for water and its own telephone exchange (now the Post Museum) which could handle 65,000 calls a day.

The Second World War 1941-1945

In 1941, trainees from Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia and the District of Columbia began arriving at the reception center on post. These men were given haircuts, familiarized with the Articles of War, received their shots and were sent to basic training from here. In addition, the 29th Division (Maryland and Virginia National Guard) was activated and assigned to the post for training. This division, and the 70th Tank Battalion, a Regular Army unit activated atthe same time the 29th was mobilized, were to make up over one third of the spearhead force at The Normandy Invasion on June 6, 1944.

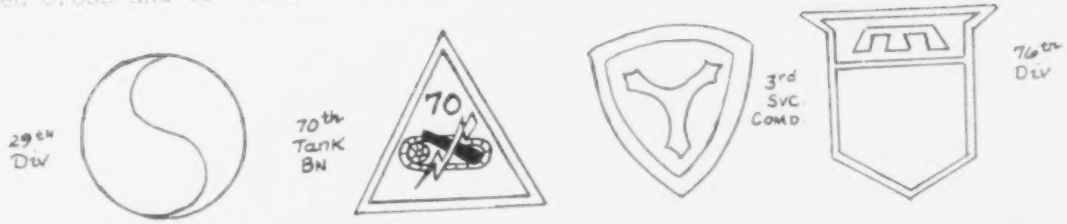
In 1942, The Tank Destroyer force was developed at Fort Meade and was quickly shipped out. That same year also saw the Special Services Unit Training Center open. Entertainers and well know personalities were trained in all phases of the Special Services Field. These included Glen Miller, Jack Benny, and Joe Lewis.

A Post Card from 1942.

Pe. C. 2 Reception Center—Interviewing for Classification, Fort Geo. G. Meade, Md.

In 1943, the Army Ground Forces Replacement Depot Number One was organized. More than one and one half million men were shipped overseas from Fort George G. Meade. In May of 1945, this same organization was utilized as a separation center, processing over 400,000 men back to civilian life.

During the war, Fort Meade served as a Prisoner of War Information Bureau. Starting in 1943, Italian, and later German prisoners were housed at Fort George G. Meade. (Many were housed in tents in a fenced area across from the indoor ranges on Simonds Road.) Mail, for all prisoners of war, was received here up to 150 bags a day. In addition, the Prisoners of War Bureau also provided prisoner information to enemy governments, the International Red Cross and to the War Crimes Commission.



Re. C. 6 On The Way To Barracks With Complete Clothing—Reception Center, Fort Geo. G. Meade, Md.

No. 718 OBSTACLE COURSE—FORT GEO. G. MEADE, MD.

World War II proved to be a most crucial time for Fort George G. Meade. In total, over three and half million men passed through the Post during the war years. Today, many American veterans of the Second World War can fondly recall the time they passed through or trained at Fort Meade.

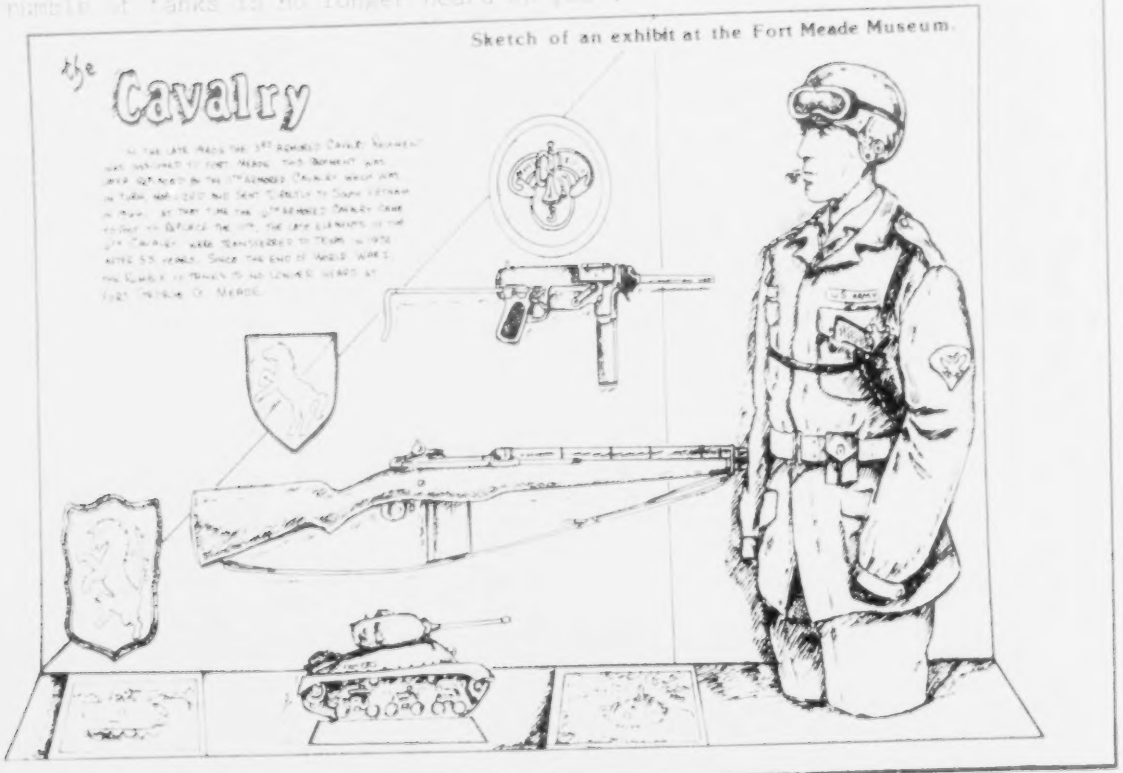
ARMY GROUND FORCES REPLACEMENT DEPOT # 1
FORT GEORGE G MEADE, MARYLAND

The Post War Period

On June 15, 1947, the Second U.S. Army Headquarters was transferred from Baltimore to Fort George G. Meade. At that time, Second Army was responsible for the Military establishments in the Mid-Atlantic Region. At the same time that Second Army arrived at Meade, a six-week ROTC Course was beginning for Infantry and Cavalry Reserve Officers Candidates. This was the first time since 1941 that the school had been held and it showed that Fort George G. Meade was getting back to Peace Time activities.

In the late 1940's, the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment was assigned to post. This Regiment was later replaced by the 11th Cavalry. In 1966 the 11th was mobilized for war and shipped directly to combat service in the Republic of Vietnam. The 6th Cavalry then replaced the 11th at Fort Meade, but in 1973 the last of this Regiment was transferred to Texas. After 55 years, since 1919, the rumble of tanks is no longer heard on post.

Sketch of an exhibit at the Fort Meade Museum.

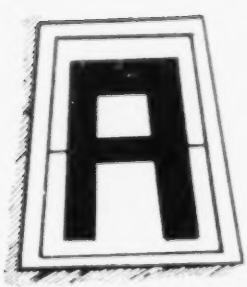


In 1952 the National Security Agency (NSA) began actions to locate at Fort George G. Meade. Construction began two years later and was completed in 1957. In 1954 the Marines established barracks here for the two companies who were to provide security for NSA (The barracks were deactivated in 1978 and the troops transferred to the Fleet Marines).

Tipton Army Airfield was constructed in 1960, replacing a small airstrip (where the bowling alley is now located) which had begun service in 1928. Tipton is named for Colonel William D. Tipton, a highly decorated Army Aviator from Maryland who had served in both World Wars, who died in an aircrash in Texas.

In June 1965, the First and Second U.S. Army Recruiting Districts were consolidated, with the headquarters at Fort George G. Meade. On January 1, 1966 the complete merger of the Second U.S. Army into First U.S. Army was completed. First Army Headquarters were at Fort George G. Meade, and the merger brought First Army a 15 state area of responsibility. Post support responsibilities were thereby increased.

In 1973, First Army began a transition from an active Army oriented organization to one dedicated to the reserve components. This new mission included command and supervision of all reserve units and personnel, and coordination and training supervision of the National Guard in their geographical area of responsibility. This mission continues today.



First U.S. Army

Second U.S. Army

Fort Meade Today

Fort George G. Meade continues to be an active Post. The tanks are gone but training and operations in support of the Army's mission continue. But the operations of the Active Army are not the sole consideration of Fort George G. Meade. The Post also provides support for Army Reserve and National Guard units throughout the year, and many reserve component units do their annual training here each summer.

Many years have passed since this installation was established and in that time much has happened here. The Post, however, continues to grow and build and improve. It boasts 186 miles of roads, a complex of training facilities, schools, museum, hospital, chapels, recreational opportunities and an air field. But above all, Fort George G. Meade can boast that, as in World War I, when needed, it is still ready.

The Logo of the Fort Meade Museum which is now used throughout Fort Meade reflects the post's proud and colorful history. The Renault tank of the Tank School, the First Army insignia, and the U.S. Army Forces Command shoulder patch all figure prominently in Fort Meade's past, present , and future.

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE : 1986 O - 152-340 : QL 3

GUIDE TO HISTORIC SITES ON FORT GEORGE G. MEADE

1. GRAVE SITE OF TANK CORPS JOE, MASCOT OF THE 66TH INFANTRY (LIGHT TANKS) 1921-1937 "A TANK RIDING DOG!"
2. SITE OF COOKS AND BAKERS SCHOOL, WORLD WAR II
3. POST CEMETARY
4. BETHEL METHODIST CEMETARY
5. SITE OF CAMP BENJ. FRANKLIN US ARMY SIGNAL CORPS, 1918
6. SITE OF THE TANK SCHOOL C. 1920-32
7. POST HEADQUARTERS / BARRACKS OF THE 66TH INF. (LT. TANKS) 1929-40
8. BURBA LAKE, (FORMERLY KELLY POOL, ROBERTS POND.)
9. ARMY READINESS + MOBILIZATION REGION III HQ'S / POST HEADQUARTERS DURING WORLD WAR II.
10. HEADQUARTERS FIRST UNITED STATES ARMY
11. POST PET CEMETARY.
12. U.S. ARMY AIRFIELD WORLD WAR II
13. DIVISION HILL, HQ FOR 29TH + 76TH DIVISIONS IN WWII.
14. U.S. ARMY ITEL + SECURITY CMD. / SITE OF 34TH INFANTRY AREA 1929-1940.
15. FT. GEORGE G. MEADE MUSEUM. / SITE OF POST TELEPHONE EXCHANGE, WWII.
16. SITE OF TENT CITY FOR TROOPS
17. SITE OF PRISONER OF WAR AREA (GERMAN + ITALIAN) WORLD WAR II.
18. SITE OF STABLES (NOW INDOOR RANGES) FOR HORSE ARTILLERY C1934-1940.
19. GOLF PRO'S HOUSE - OLDEST EXISTING STRUCTURE ON FT. MEADE, ORIGINALLY A FARMHOUSE.
20. SITE OF POST HEADQUARTERS - DURING WORLD WAR I.

An Historical View of Fort George G. Meade Maryland

Highlighting some significant sites Located within the Main Post area

THE POST WAS NAMED IN HONOR OF MAJOR GENERAL GEORGE GORDON MEADE. COMMANDER OF THE UNION ARMY OF THE POTOMAC FROM GETTYSBURG (1863) TO APPOMATTOX (1865).

OVER 3½ MILLION MEN PASSED THROUGH FT. MEADE IN WORLD WAR II

"OLDE BOOM TOWN"

THE "HELLO GIRLS" OF THE SIGNAL CORPS WERE THE FIRST UNIFORMED WOMEN TO SERVE IN THE U.S. FORCES. THEY TRAINED AT CAMP FRANKLIN, 1918 (NO. 5)

UNION ARMY CAMP KELLOGG 1861-1865 NEAR ANNAPOLIS JUNC.

TIPTON ARMY AIRFIELD

U.S. ARMY REMOUNT STATION 1917-1918 (SUPPLIED HORSES TO AEF IN EUROPE)

ANNAPOLIS AND ELK RIDGE RAIL ROAD RIGHT OF WAY - 1840-1908 WB+A RAIL ROAD 1908-1935

POST STABLES

RIFLE RANGES 1917-PRESENT